

Message Text

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SUBJECT: ENERGY TECHNOLOGY COOPERATION WITH VENEZUELA -VISIT OF
DOE TEAM ON ENHANCED OIL RECOVERY

REF: (A) STATE 136608 (B) STATE 018131

SUMMARY: DOE TEAM PARTICIPATED IN FULL SCHEDULE OF BRIEFINGS AND
FIELD VISITS ON VENEZUELAN ENHANCED OIL RECOVERY ACTIVITIES. OFFICIALS

OF GOV, INCLUDING MINISTER HERNANDEZ, AND OF OPERATING COMPANIES
EXPRESSED STRONG INTEREST IN COOPERATION WITH US IN THIS FIELD. TEAM
WILL PREPARE REPORT IDENTIFYING POSSIBLE AREAS AND TYPES OF
COOPERATION TO SERVE AS BASIS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH
GOV OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON. END SUMMARY.

1. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY TEAM ON ENHANCED OIL RECOVERY, ACCOMPANIED
BY EMBASSY PETROLEUM OFFICER, PARTICIPATED IN A SERIES OF MEETINGS
AND FIELD TRIPS WITH GOV OFFICIALS AND MANAGERS OF THE OPERATING
OIL COMPANIES ARRANGED BY THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND MINES, AS
FOLLOWS:

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JUNE 5- INTRODUCTORY MEETING WITH MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINES
BRIEFING BY LAGOVEN ON PROPOSED JOBO II CONTINUOUS STEAM
INJECTION HEAVY OIL RECOVERY PILOT PROJECT.
BRIEFING BY CVP ON HEAVY OIL PROJECTS IN EASTERN VENEZUELA.

JUNE 6- BRIEFING BY MARACEN ON M-6 CONTINUOUS STEAM INJECTION
PROJECT AT LAGUNILLAS AND OTHER RELATED PROJECTS.

BRIEFING BY MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND MINES ON ORINOCO HEAVY OIL BELT- GEOLOGY, RESERVES AND PROPOSED PILOT PROJECTS.

JUNE 7-FIEL TRIP TO LAGUNILLAS FOR INAUGURATION OF MARAVEN'S M-6 PROJECT.

JUNE 8- FIELD TRIP TO EASTERN VENEZUELA AND ORINIOCO HEAVY OIL BELT, INCLUDING MORICHAL AND SAN TOME CAMPS AND SITE OF CERRO NEGRO PILOT PROJECT.

JUNE 9- BRIEFING BY MENEVEN ON CURRENT AND PROPOSED GAS INJECTION RECOVERY PROJECTS IN EASTERN VENEZUELA.
BRIEFING BY INTEVEP (PETROLUEM TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE).
FINAL MEETING WITH MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINES.
DETAILED LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN ABOVE MEETINGS BEING POUCHED.

2. BRIEFINGS BY MAJOR OPERATING COMPANIES WERE CHAIRED BY SENIOR PRODUCTION MANAGERS AND CONDUCTED BY TECHNICAL STAFF WHO PROVIDED DETAILED TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT AND PROJECTED ENHANCED OIL RECOVERY EFFORTS IN VENEZUELA AND WHO WERE ABLE TO ANSWER ALMOST ALL QUESTIONS RAISED BY TEAM MEMBERS. OFFICIALS OF THE MINISTRY AND OF THE OPERATING COMPANIES REPEATEDLY EXPRESSED INTEREST IN ADVANCED DEVELOPMENTS IN THE US IN THE ENHANCED RECOVERY FIELD AND IN THE PROSPECTS FOR COOPERATION WITH THE USG AND WITH PRIVATE US FIRMS WORKING IN THIS FIELD.

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3. IN THEIR FINAL MEETING JUNE 9, MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINES HERNANDEZ REITERATED THE GOV'S INTEREST IN GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT COOPERATION WITH THE US ON ENERGY TECHNOLOGY, IN PARTICULAR TECHNOLOGY INVOLVING HEAVY OIL AND ENHANCED RECOVERY. HE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF INITIATING SUCH COOPERATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, EVEN IF THIS MEANS STARTING ON A SMALL SCALE, AND SAID HE HAD NO PRECONCEIVED VIEWS ON THE PRECISE FORM SUCH COOPERATION SHOULD TAKE. (OTHER MINISTRY OFFICIALS DO APPEAR TO HAVE AT LEAST SOME PERSONAL VIEWS ON THE FORM OF COOPERATION, BASED ON THEIR EARLIER COMMENTS TO THE TEAM MEMBERS.) IT WAS AGREED AT THE MEETING THAT THE DOE TEAM WOULD PREPARE A REPORT ON THEIR VISIT, IDENTIFYING POSSIBLE AREAS IN WHICH MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL COOPERATION COULD TAKE PLACE AS WELL AS POSSIBLE FORMS FOR THIS COOPERATION. SPECIFIC TYPES OF COOPERATION WILL THEN BE DISCUSSED DURING THE FORTHCOMING VISIT TO THE US OF DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR HYDROCARBOSN AREVALE REYES IN ABOUT ONE MONTH.
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